

Message Text

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64

ACTION PM-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

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R 081053Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2271

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

CINCPAC

S E C R E T SINGAPORE 1406

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: MARR, SN, NZ

SUBJ: NEW ZEALAND MANAGEMENT OF NAVAL BASIN BERTHS AND FUEL DEPOT

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

REF: SINGAPORE 1374

1. SUMMARY: GOS HAS INFORMED EMBASSY THAT IT HAS DECIDED TO PERMIT NEW ZEALAND TO MANAGE TWO BERTHS IN THE NAVAL STORES BASIN AND THE RELATED OIL STORAGE DEPOT. DECISION WILL NOT BE CONVEYED FORMALLY FOR THREE OR FOUR WEEKS. UPMBPS#CONTINUING DISTORTED PRESS REPORTS RE U.S. PRESSURE ON NEW ZEALAND ON THIS MATTER ADVERSELY AFFECTS GNZ ATTITUDE, BELIEVE MINISTER OF DEFENSE FRAZER'S VISIT TO SINGAPORE APRIL 23 WILL PROVIDE USEFUL OPPORTUNITY FOR GNZ AND GOS TO DISCUSS

MATTER AND MAY BE HELPFUL IN ENGENDERING A POSITIVE GNZ DECISION.
END SUMMARY.

2. ON APRIL 7 S.R. NATHAN, DIRECTOR OF SECURITY INTELLIGENCE DIVISION IN MINDEF, INFORMED EMBOFF THAT ACTING PRIME MINISTER GOH KENG SWEE HAD INSTRUCTED HIM TO ADVISE THE AMERICAN EMBASSY THAT THE GOS

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HAD DECIDED TO PERMIT NEW ZEALAND TO MANAGE BERTHS 6 AND 7 OF THE

NAVAL STORES BASIN AND THE RELATED OIL STORAGE DEPOT, BUT THAT THIS DECISION WILL NOT BE CONVEYED FORMALLY FOR THREE OR FOUR WEEKS.

3. NATHAN SAID THE DELAY WAS DUE TO A CABINET DIRECTIVE TO GOS DEPARTMENTS CONCERNING ANZUK PROPERTIES WHICH WOULD BE SURRENDERED TO GOS CONTROL. EACH INTERESTED DEPARTMENT HAD BEEN REQUESTED TO ADVISE THE CABINET OF ANY PROPERTIES IN WHICH IT WAS INTERESTED, INDICATING THE USE TO WHICH THE PROPERTY WOULD BE PUT AND THE DEGREE OF URGENCY ATTACHED TO THE INTEREST BEING EXPRESSED. THE BERTHS 6 AND 7 AND RELATED FACILITIES WERE AMONG THE PROPERTIES INCLUDED WITHIN THE DIRECTIVE, AND THEREFORE WILL BE PROCESSED PRO FORMA LIKE OTHER ANZUK HOLDINGS. NATHAN ESTIMATED THAT THIS PROCESS MIGHT TAKE ONE MONTH. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT HE HOPED TO BE ABLE TO PROVIDE US WITH A SPECIFIC DATE WHEN THE FORMAL DECISION WILL BE MADE ON THE RETURN OF THE PRIME MINISTER FROM HIS VACATION IN NEW ZEALAND.

4. REUTERS DESPATCH DATELINED WELLINGTON APRIL 7 AND PUBLISHED IN LOCAL STRAITS TIMES REPORTS SOURCES IN WELLINGTON AS SAYING THAT IN DISCUSSIONS WITH GNZ CABINET LEE QUOTE MIGHT WELL RAISE THE SUGGESTION

THAT THE UNITED STATES NAVY SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO USE THE SINGAPORE DOCKYARDS. AMERICA IS SAID TO HAVE RECENTLY PUT PRESSURE ON NEW ZEALAND TO USE HER INFLUENCE WITH THE SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT TO HAVE THE FACILITIES MADE AVAILABLE UNQUOTE.

5. IN VIEW FAVORABLE DEVELOPMENT IN GOS THINKING AS INDICATED PARAS 2 AND 3, IT WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE IF GNZ ATTITUDE RE MANAGING THESE BERTHS AND FUEL FARM WERE TO BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED AS RESULT

OF BOTH EXCESSIVE AND DISTORTED PUBLICITY. REQUEST EMBASSY WELLINGTON'S

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT GNZ ATTITUDE ON THIS QUESTION. IT IS UNLIKELY GOS WILL RAISE MATTER WITH GNZ, BUT UNLESS P.M. LEE OVERRULES DR. GOH ON HIS RETURN TO SINGAPORE, BELIEVE GOS WILL RESPOND FAVORABLY TO ANY GNZ INITIATIVE. THEREFORE, WE HOPE THAT WHEN MINISTER OF DEFENSE FRAZER VISITS SINGAPORE ON APRIL 23, HE WILL AT LEAST BE PREPARED TO PUT FORWARD THE TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION EVEN IF GNZ HAS NOT YET FINALLY DECIDED ITS POSITION ON THE MATTER. PRESUMABLY, IF FRAZER RETURNS TO WELLINGTON WITH A FIRST-HAND REPORT THAT GOS APPEARS FAVORABLY INCLINED TOWARD GNZ MANAGEMENT OF THESE FACILITIES,

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IT MAY BE HELPFUL IN ENGENDERING A POSITIVE GNZ DECISION. CRONK

NOTE BY OCT: #AS RECEIVED.

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NNN

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